Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

receiving a request to play a first audio file and a second audio file;

analyzing data samples of the first audio file;

~~identifying~~ wherein analyzing the data samples of the first audio file identifies a first effective start position, and a fade-out position associated with the first audio file;

~~identifying a fade-out position associated with the first audio file;~~

analyzing data samples of the second audio file;

~~identifying~~ wherein analyzing the data samples of the second audio file identifies a second effective start position associated with the second audio file;

playing the first audio file from the first effective start position;

upon reaching the fade-out position associated with the first audio file:

fading-out playback of the first audio file; and

playing the second audio file from the second effective start position.

2. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1 wherein the fade-out position is located a predetermined time ahead of an effective end position associated with the first audio file.

3. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1 wherein the first effective start position differs from the start of the first audio file.

4. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising fading-out playback of the second audio file upon reaching a fade-out position associated with the second audio file.

5. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1 wherein the first effective start position and the fade-out position associated with the first audio file are stored in a media library.

6. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1 wherein the first effective start position and the fade-out position associated with the first audio file are stored in the first audio file.

7. (Original) One or more computer-readable memories containing a computer program that is executable by a processor to perform the method recited in claim 1.

8. (Original) A method comprising:

receiving a request to analyze an audio file;

selecting the first two data samples in the audio file;

calculating an average value of the first two data samples in the audio file;

if the average value exceeds a threshold value, marking the second data sample as an effective start position associated with the audio file and marking the first data sample as silent;

if the average value does not exceed the threshold value:

selecting subsequent data samples in the audio file and updating the average value of all selected data samples until the average value exceeds a threshold value;

marking a current data sample as an effective start position associated with the audio file; and

marking previously selected data samples as silent.

9. (Original) A method as recited in claim 8 wherein the average value of the data samples is calculated based on volume levels in the audio file.

10. (Original) A method as recited in claim 8 further comprising saving the effective start position associated with the audio file to a media library.

11. (Original) A method as recited in claim 8 further comprising saving the effective start position associated with the audio file to a storage device that stores the audio file.

12. (Original) A method as recited in claim 8 further comprising saving information regarding data samples marked as silent to a storage device that stores the audio file.

13. (Original) A method as recited in claim 8 wherein the effective start position is applied during subsequent playback of the audio file.

14. (Original) A method as recited in claim 8 wherein the effective start position is applied during subsequent playback of the audio file to determine a point at which the audio file begins to fade-in as a previous audio file fades out.

15. (Original) One or more computer-readable memories containing a computer program that is executable by a processor to perform the method recited in claim 8.

16. (Original) A method comprising:

receiving a request to analyze an audio file;

selecting the last two data samples in the audio file;

calculating an average value of the last two data samples in the audio file;

if the average value exceeds a threshold value, marking the last data sample as an effective end position associated with the audio file and marking the other selected data sample as silent;

if the average value does not exceed the threshold value:

selecting previous data samples in the audio file and updating the average value of all selected data samples until the average value exceeds a threshold value;

marking a current data sample as an effective end position associated with the audio file; and

marking previously selected data samples as silent.

17. (Original) A method as recited in claim 16 wherein the method is performed by a media player application.

18. (Original) A method as recited in claim 16 further comprising saving the effective end position associated with the audio file in a media library.

19. (Original) A method as recited in claim 16 further comprising saving the effective end position associated with the audio file to a storage device that stores the audio file.

20. (Original) A method as recited in claim 16 wherein the average value of the data samples is calculated based on volume levels in the audio file.

21. (Original) A method as recited in claim 16 further comprising saving information regarding data samples marked as silent to a storage device that stores the audio file.

22. (Original) A method as recited in claim 16 wherein the effective end position is applied during subsequent playback of the audio file.

23. (Original) A method as recited in claim 16 wherein the effective end position is applied during subsequent playback of the audio file to determine a point at which the audio file begins to fade-out.

24. (Original) One or more computer-readable memories containing a computer program that is executable by a processor to perform the method recited in claim 16.

25. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a cross-fade parameter calculator to analyze data samples of an audio file and calculate at least one fade-out parameter associated with the audio file;

a media library coupled to the cross-fade parameter calculator, the media library to store fade-out parameters associated with a plurality of audio files;

wherein the fade-out parameters are stored separate from the audio files; and

a cross-fader coupled to the media library, the cross-fader to apply fade-out parameters during playback of audio files.

26. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 25 wherein the cross-fade parameter calculator calculates an effective start position associated with the audio file.

27. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 25 wherein the cross-fade parameter calculator calculates an effective end position associated with the audio file.

28. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 25 wherein the cross-fader retrieves fade-out parameters from the media library.

29. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

means for receiving a request to play a first audio file followed by a second audio file;

means for analyzing data samples of the first audio file;

~~identifying~~ wherein analyzing the data samples of the first audio file identifies a first effective start position and a fade-out position associated with the first audio file, and ~~a fade-out position associated with the first audio file, and~~

analyzing data samples of the second audio file;

wherein analyzing the data samples of the second audio file identifies a second effective start position associated with the second audio file; and

means for playing the first audio file from the first effective start position, wherein upon reaching the fade-out position associated with the first audio file, the means for playing fades-out playback of the first audio file and begins playing the second audio file from the second effective start position.

30. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 29 wherein the fade-out position is located a predetermined time prior to an effective end position associated with the first audio file.

31. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 29 wherein the means for playing fades-out playback of the second audio file upon reaching a fade-out position associated with the second audio file.

32. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 29 wherein the start position associated with the first audio file, the fade-out position associated with the first audio file, and the second effective start position associated with the second audio file are retrieved from a media library.

33. (Original) An apparatus as recited in claim 29 wherein the start position associated with the first audio file and the fade-out position associated with the first audio file are retrieved from the first audio file.

34. (Currently Amended) One or more computer-readable media having stored thereon a computer program that, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to:

receive a request to play a sequence of audio files;

analyze data samples of a first audio file, wherein analyzing yields data used to calculate a first effective start position and a fade-out position associated with the a first audio file;

~~calculate a fade-out position associated with the first audio file;~~

analyze data samples of a second audio file, wherein analyzing yields data used to calculate a second effective start position associated with a second audio file;

play the first audio file from the first effective start position;

upon reaching the fade-out position associated with the first audio file:

fade-out playback of the first audio file; and

play the second audio file from the second effective start position.

35. (Original) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 34 wherein the fade-out position associated with the first audio file is calculated by subtracting a predetermined time period from an effective end position associated with the first audio file.

36. (Original) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 34 wherein the one or more processors further fade-out playback of the second audio file upon reaching a fade-out position associated with the second audio file.

37. (Original) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 34 wherein the one or more processors further calculate effective start positions and fade-out positions associated with each audio file in the sequence of audio files.